

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 AID-20 EB-11 FSI-01 PM-07

INR-10 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 RSR-01

DPW-01 PRS-01 OMB-01 SS-15 /148 W

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P R 040945Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6715

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USDEL JEC PARIS

CIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

JUSMAAG

WHITE HOUSE

USAJFKCMA

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDAO SAIGON

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CINCPAC

CINCPACAF
CO 7TH PSYOP
CINCPACFLT
CINCUSARPAC
DEPCHIEF JUSMAAG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 15847/1

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, ECON, VS
SUBJECT: EMBASSY SAIGON'S MISSION WEEKLY, AUGUST 29-SEPT 4,1973

BANGKOK ALSO PASS OSA; DEPT ALSO FOR AID/W; CINCPAC FOR POLAD;
DOD PRO USAJFKCMA ATTN: ATCS-WL-(9-

THE WEEK IN BRIEF

--LITTLE CHANGE IN MILITARY PICTURE COUNTRYWIDE: FIGHTING UP IN
MR-1, DOWN IN MR -3, AT ABOUT THE SAME LEVEL ELSEWHERE

--NO PROGRESS ON REPATRIATION OF REMAINS NEGOTIATIONS

--TPJMC FIREWORKS IN AUGUST 31 POLEMICAL CONFRONTATION

--ADVANCE IRANIAN ICCS PARTY ARRIVES AUGUST 29

--23RD RVN/PRG BILATERAL PARIS MEETING PRODUCES ONLY MORE POLEMICS

--DRV CELEBRATES 28TH ANNIVERSARY

--LE DUAN RETURNS TO HANOI

--DRV-UK ESTABLISH AMBASSADORIAL-LEVEL RELATIONS

--VIET CONG CHIEF DELEGATE THO DEPARTS FROM "SOMEWHERE IN SVN"
FOR NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE

--PRICES STABLE; GOLD UP; BLACK MARKET RATE FOR US DOLLARS
AGAIN SLIGHTLY OVER LEGAL EXCHANGE RATE

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--RURAL BANK TRAINING COURSE TO BEGIN

1. INTERNAL

THE CEASEFIRE

COMBAT ACTIVITY INCREASED IN MR-1 DURING THE WEEK, AS RVNAF
ATTEMPTS TO RETAKE POSITIONS IN THE SONG BO CORRIDOR WEST OF HUE

MET WITH INCREASED RESISTANCE. NVA/VC FORCES ALSO MADE THEIR OWN PROBES FURTHER SOUTH IN THUA THIEN PROVINCE, NEAR PHU BAI. THE LEVEL OF FIGHTING IN MR-2 REMAINED MUCH THE SAME AS IN PAST WEEKS, WITH FIGHTING WEST OF KONTUM CITY AND IN NORTHERN BINH DINH AND WITH RELATIVE QUIET ELSEWHERE IN THE REGION, MR-3 SAW A DISTINCT DECREASE IN FIGHTING, WITH ONLY FIVE INCIDENTS REPORTED BY JGS SEPT 3, THE LOWEST NUMBER SINCE EARLY JULY. MR-4 ACTIVITY ALSO REFLECTED A CONTINUING PATTERN, WITH SOME SHARP CLASHES IN BINH DINH AND CHUONG THIEN, AND SCATTERED INCIDENTS ELSEWHERE.

NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE REPATRIATION OF REMAINS AND ON OBTAINING INFORMATION ON THE MISSING IN ACTION IN THE FOUR PARTY JOINT MILITARY TEAM (FPJMT) MADE NO PROGRESS.

THE TWO PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION (TPJMC) DEADLOCK ALSO CONTINUED, WITH NO PROGRESS ON THE SET-PIECE AGENDA ITEMS WHICH APPEAR AND RE-APPEAR AT EACH SESSION: RETURN OF POW'S AND CIVILIAN DETAINEES; DEPLOYMENT TO FIELD LOCATIONS; AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE CEASEFIRE. HOWEVER, THE AUG 31 SESSION SAW FIREWORKS AS PRG SENIOR COL VO DONG GIANG GENERATED SOME HEAT BY POINTING HIS FINGER AT BGEN PHAN HOA HIEP, DEHNKMC CHIEF OF THE RVN DELEGATION, ACCUSING HIM OF "SELLING" HIS COUNTRY TO "THE AMERICANS". IN RETALIATION, THE RVN DELEGATION CANCELLED THE REGULAR SATURDAY PRG PRESS CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR SEPT 1 AND BOYCOTTED THE MEETING OF THE FIVE SUB-COMMITTEES ON SEPT 1 AND 3. THE TPJMC CHIEFS OF DELEGATION DID MEET SEPT 4.

THE ADVANCE PARTY OF THE IRANIAN CONTINGENT TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CONTROL AND SUPERVISION (ICCS) ARRIVED IN SAIGON AUG 29. THE FIVE MAN IRANIAN GROUP WAS LED BY STAFF COL SOLTAN-MOHAMAD ETEMAD. NO DATE HAS YET BEEN ANNOUNCED FOR THE ARRIVAL OF ADDITIONAL IRANIAN ICCS PERSONNEL.

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PART II. EXTERNAL

A. GVN-VIET CONG BILATERALS: 23RD PLENARY SESSION, AUG 30, 1973

VICE PM NGUYEN LUU VIEN, FOR THE GVN, OPENED THE SESSION WITH A DEFENSE OF THE NIXON DOCTRINE WHICH THE PRG HAD ATTACKED IN PREVIOUS MEETINGS. HE WENT ON TO CONDEMN COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE AGREEMENT CITING THE BUILD UP AT KHE SANH AS EVIDENCE OF COMMUNIST ILL-INTENT. VIEN REITERATED THE GVN'S WILLINGNESS TO HOLD GENERAL ELECTIONS ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

NGUYEN VAN HIEU, FOR THE VIET CONG, REPEATED EARLIER PROPOSALS, CLAIMING THAT THESE DEMONSTRATED COMMUNIST GOODWILL. HE RESORTED TO THE USUAL CALUMNIES REGARDING GVN TREATMENT OF PRISONERS,

THE AUGUST 26 SENATE BI-ELECTIONS, VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASEFIRE
AND SO FORTH. NEXT MEETING SEPT 6.

B. DRV CELEBRATES 28TH ANNIVERSARY

SPEECHES, COMMENTARY , AND CEREMONIES ON THE OCCASION OF THE 28TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE DRV WILL BE REPORTED SEPTTEL.

C. LE DUAN RETURNS TO HANOI

VWP FIRST SECRETARY LE DUAN ARRIVED IN HANOI ON AUG 31 AFTER A
LENGTHY STAY IN THE USSR. ON HIS RETURN TRIP, DUAN SPENT TWO
DAYS IN PEKING WHERE HE WAS ENTERTAINED BY PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI
ON AUG 30. THE SAME DAY HE ENJOYED A "CORDIAL TALK" WITH SIHANOUK.

D. DRV-UK AMBASSADORIAL-LEVEL TIES ANNOUNCED.

THE DRV FOREIGN MINISTRY ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE ON SEPT 1 ANNOUNCING
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE UK EFFECTIVE
THAT DAY AND THE INTENTION OF THE TWO COUNTRIES TO EXCHANGE
ENVOYS OF AMBASSADORIAL RANK.

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

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INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
RUESRWXAMEMBASSY WARSAW 1204
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
USDEL JEC PARIS
CIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
JCS WASHDC
JUSMAAG
WHITE HOUSE
USAJFKCMA
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMCONSUL CAN THO
AMCONSUL DANANG
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG
USDAO SAIGON
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CINCPAC
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CO 7TH PSYOP
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DEPCHIEF JUSMAAG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAIGON 15847/2

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, ECON, VS
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BANGKOK ALSO PASS OSA; DEPT ALSO FOR AID/W; CINCPAC FOR POLAD;
DOD PRO USAJFKCMA ATTN: ATCS-WL-DSA

E. VIET CONG CHIEF DELEGATE TO "NON-ALIGNED" CONFERENCE
DEPARTS SOUTH VIET-NAM

ACCORDING TO A LIBERATION RADIO BROADCAST ON AUG 28, NGUYEN HUU
THO, CHAIRMAN OF THE NLF AND "PRG" ADVISORY COUNCIL, "RECENTLY"
LEFT A COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED ZONE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM BOUND FOR THE
ALGIERS "NON-ALIGNED" CONFERENCE (NAC). DURING A STOP-OVER IN
HANOI, THO RECEIVED DRV PRESIDENT TON DUC THANK AND VIETNAM
WORKERS"PARTY (VWP) FIRST SECRETARY LE DUAN. HALF THE VWP
POLITBURO SAW HIM OFF AT THE AIRPORT ON SEPT 2. EARLIER, ON
AUG 28, TASS REPORTED THAT VIETCONG FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN THI

BINH HAD LEFT MOSCOW FOR ALGIERS. JOINING THO AND BINH ON THE VIET CONG DELEGATION TO THE NAC WILL BE MINISTER OF STATE NGUYEN VAN HIEU (CHIEF OF VC DELEGATION AT PARIS BILATERALS), DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER HOANG BICH SON AND, ACCORDING TO AN AUGUST 29 LIBERATION RADIO BROADCAST, "A NUMBER OF AMBASSADORS AND HIGH-RANKING CADRES AND SPECIALISTS" OF THE VIET CONG FOREIGN MINISTRY.

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III. ECONOMIC

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A. PRICES

THE USAID SAIGON RETAIL PRICE INDEX FOR THE WEEK ENDING SEPT 3 SHOWED NO CHANGE OVERALL. ALL ITEMS ON THE NON-FOOD SIDE OF THE INDEX REMAINED UNCHANGED EXCEPT FOR LAUNDRY SOAP, UP 2 PERCENT. ON THE FOOD SIDE THERE WERE SEVERAL INCREASES: RICE (ONE PERCENT), COOKING OIL (4 PERCENT), ORANGE SODA (8 PERCENT) DUCKS (2 PERCENT) AND DUCK EGGS (3 PERCENT), BUT THESE WERE OFFSET BY DECLINES IN PRICES FOR SEA FISH AND SHRIMP (5 AND 6 PERCENT) AND A FEW VEGETABLES. THIS THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE WEEK IN WHICH THE INDEX HAS NOT

INCREASED. THE INDEX IS LIKELY TO REMAIN STABLE IN THE NEAR TERM. RICE PRICES ARE CURRENTLY FIXED AND RETAIL SALES ARE NORMAL. CONTINUATION OF STABILITY IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER WILL DEPEND HEAVILY ON DELTA RICE DELIVERIES TO SAIGON.

B. BLACK MARKET CURRENCY AND GOLD PRICES

FOR THE SECOND WEEK BLACK MARKET CURRENCY QUOTES STAYED ABOVE THE LEGAL EXCHANGE RATE. QUOTES FOR \$100 GREEN MOVED UP SLIGHTLY FROM 505:1 TO 506:1 AND \$10 GREEN FROM 500:1 TO 502:1. TWENTY-FOUR CARET GOLD LEAF PRICES ROSE FROM 58,500 PIASTERS PER Tael TO 59,500. AT THE LEGAL CONVERSION RATE OF 500:1 THIS TRANSLATES TO \$US 98.70 PER TROY OUNCE. THE GOLD QUOTE FROM HONGKONG AS OF AUG 27 WAS \$100.07, A DIFFERENCE OF ONLY \$US1.37. THIS IS THE SMALLEST DIFFERENCE SINCE APRIL OF 1972.

C. RURAL BANK TRAINING COURSE.

ON SEPT 3, CEREMONIES WERE HELD IN SAIGON FOR THE FORMATION OF A NEW CLASS OF PRIVATE RURAL BANK TRAINEES. THE 120 PARTICIPANTS REPRESENTED 24 BANKS, 10 OF WHICH ARE ALREADY IN OPERATION AND 14 WHICH ARE EXPECTED TO BE OPENED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THE SIX WEEKS OF CLASSES ARE DESIGNED TO THOROUGHLY FAMILIARIZE

THE TRAINEES WITH RURAL BANK OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES.

VIETNAM'S RURAL BANK POPULATION NOW STANDS AT 45 WITH THE MOST
RECENT OPENING HAVING TAKEN PLACE AUG 8,1973 IN HUONG THUY
DISTRICT NEAR HUE. SIXTY-FIVE PRIVATE RURAL BANKS ARE PLANNED
TO BE IN OPERATION BY THE END OF THE YEAR.

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Message Attributes

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To: STATE
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